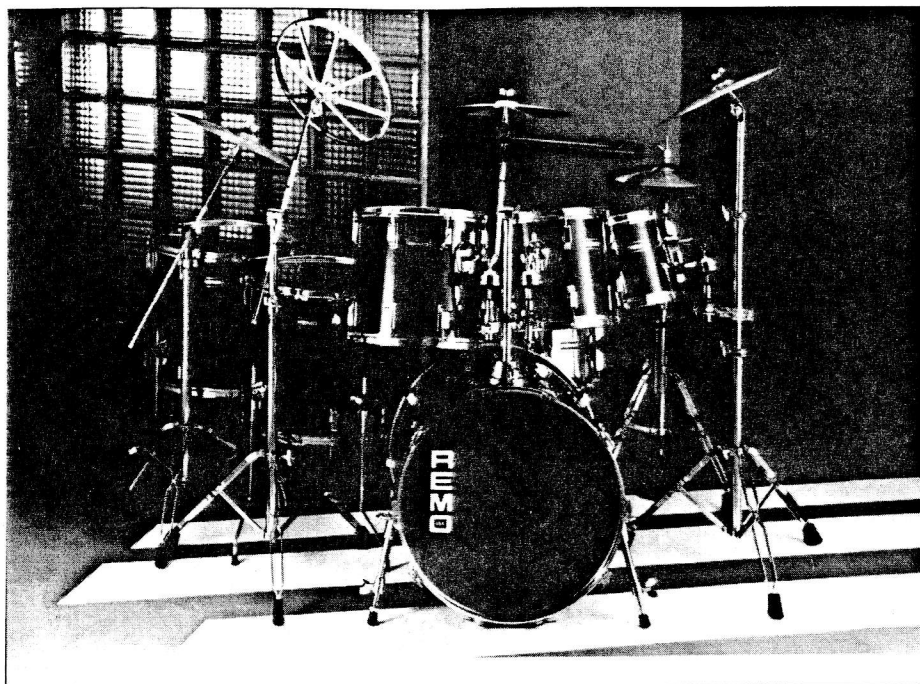


Road Test

Remo Encore Drums



Once upon a time, all drumheads were made of calfskin. Remo developed new drumheads of a then-unproven material called Mylar, and revolutionized the drum world. Now, Remo is making drum shells from an unlikely composite of wood fiber and resins named Acousticon. With most drums being made of wood, Remo has taken quite a chance with this "unproven" material, and have had some pleasing results.

The Encore series is their top-of-the-line drumkit, and is available in standard and power sizes. One feature unique to the series is the Powersnap lugs. While still allowing complete tuneability, the lugs snap open if you need to change a drumhead, and then snaps closed to tune it. The tuning rod, washer, and claw stay in the lug casing on the bass drum, and remain in the hoop hole on the toms and snare drum. No parts can be lost, and changing heads is extremely quick with this design.

Remo's double tom holder has a single tube going into the bass drum, and it holds two separate tom arms. The arms use a caged ball system for angle adjustment, and the arms can swivel independently in the holder to adjust spread. The tom brackets accept the hexagonal steel L-arms and clamp them in place with large wing adjusters. (The folding bass drum spurs use the same large adjusters.) The holder works just great; it's very stable and gives many varied drum angles.

One criticism I have is of the large

adjuster wing-bolts throughout the kit. Some work rather stiffly and don't have a fluid feel — they're difficult to loosen at times. The floor tom legs don't hold securely, as I've noticed they'll slip or twist sometimes, and in one instance, one of the legs collapsed in the bracket. Perhaps a hexagonal leg design would work better.

The kit I played had 8, 10, and 12-inch rack toms all in power sizes, plus a 14-inch floor tom and 14 x 22 bass drum. (A 16-inch depth is also available.) All the toms had Remo Pinstripe heads and gave a powerful, clear, round tone with good volume. I got a lot of compliments from other band members on the bass drum sound. Even with both heads on and no hole cut out, it was deep and very punchy. In fact, it gave me what I deem the "ideal" drum sound, as far as my own ears go.

Remo's Encore snare drums come in 5- and 8-inch depths, and also are equipped with Powersnap lugs. The Powersnap concept is somewhat defeated on the bottom snare head, as the gate on the hoop is not cut away, so the strainer and snares still need to be disconnected from each other when changing the bottom head. The strainer throws off from the center, and tensions the snare wires evenly. The 5-inch drum had good snap and volume for loud playing, and was pretty sensitive for those quiet moments.

Remo has four lines of drum hardware, with the 510 Series being top-of-the-line. The 510 stands have double-

braced tripods, thick chrome tubing, and positive height clamp adjustments. The snare stand can go super-low for deep drums and uses a ball clamp for angular positioning. Both the high hat and bass drum pedal have chain linkages. The high hat has double external springs, while the drum pedal has a single spring. They both operate silently and efficiently with no binding.

One other feature that sets Remo apart from the others is their drum finish which they call Quadura. The coverings consist of various layers of film, with the color in the middle. They will not scratch or wrinkle up under temperature extremes. The Hi-Tech Gray finish on the kit I played looked marvelous under lights with its super high gloss. To add to the "cosmetic appeal," Remo uses a black Ebony front bass drum head, and they've just redesigned their logo decals for a more modern look, and all drums now include serial numbers (crucial for your insurance policy).

The Remo Encore kit has a superb sound and superb construction. Not to be confused with their Pre-Tuned drumkits, these are genuine tuneable drums built to take it, that sound as good if not better than traditional wood, and deserve a chance to be seen and heard. A five-piece power shell kit without hardware retails at \$1455. *Circle 75 for more information.*

— Les Real